

THE

LETTER

# SHEKEL



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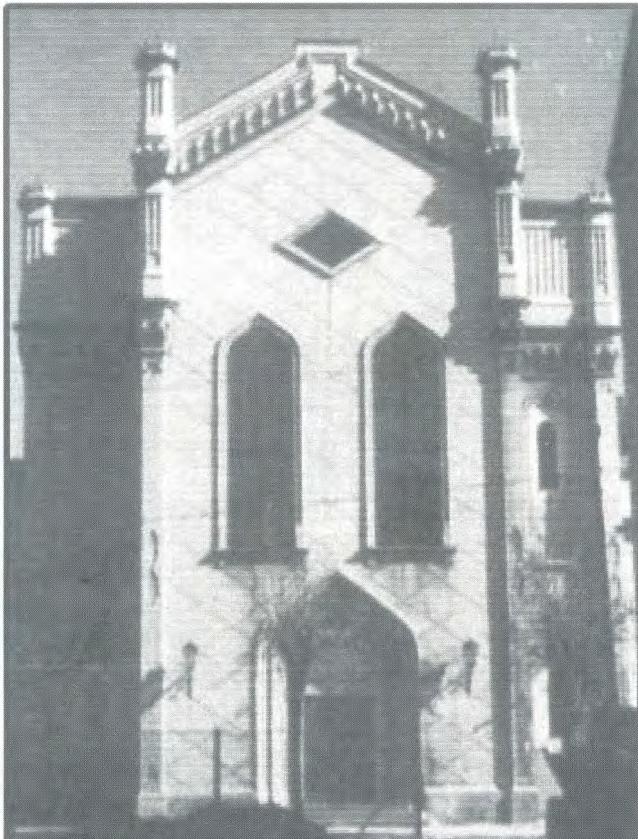
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VOLUMEN XXXIX

Nº 3

May - June 2006

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**The Great Synagogue of Piotrkow**



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**EDWARD SCHUMAN, Editor**

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The American Israel Numismatic Association (A.I.N.A.) is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. A.I.N.A. is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a not for profit association under the laws of The State of New York. A.I.N.A.'s primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby. The Association supports a web page <http://amerisrael.com> in which full information about the organization and a sampling of past articles from the SHEKEL are shown. The Association attends national and regional conventions, sponsors study tours to Israel, publication of books and catalogs and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. A.I.N.A. supports Young Numismatists programs which encourage and introduce youth to our hobby. Audio-visual and slide programs are available from the A.I.N.A. archives on many Judaica subjects and are available at no cost except for transportation charges. Local Israel Numismatic Society chapters exist in several areas. Please write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It has been referred to as a Jewish Reader's Digest. The SHEKEL is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership. You are invited to submit an article for publication.

### **Annual Membership fees:**

**U.S., Canada and Mexico \$18. - Foreign \$25. - Life \$300.**

**Send all remittances, change of address and correspondence  
to AINA % Florence Schuman 12555 Biscayne Blvd #733**

**North Miami, FL 33181**

## **President's Message**

By Mel Wacks

AINA will be co-sponsoring the Holyland Expo in conjunction with the Las Vegas Coin, Currency & Stamp Expo at Circus Circus Hotel May 26-28, 2006. For special room rates call (800) 634-3450 and indicate code D05 ICSC. We will have exhibits and meetings; I hope to see you there.

AINA has a wonderful library of slide programs, as indicated below. These have been unavailable for some time, but they have now been transferred to the American Numismatic Association and are available to all AINA members at no cost ... to show to family, friends, synagogue and church groups, fraternal organizations, etc. Please contact Nancy W. Green, Librarian, American Numismatic Association, 818 N. Cascade Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80903; call 719-482-9859 or email green@money.org. Please indicate that you are an AINA member.

### **AINA Slide Programs**

1. Learning to Read Hebrew Dates & Numerical Values on Coins and Currency (80 slides)
2. Coin-Medals of Historical Cities in Israel (94 slides)
3. Portrait of Israel through its 5 Pound Commemorative Coins (104 slides)
4. Formation of Israel's Defense Forces (67 slides)
5. The Paper Currency of the State of Israel (97 slides)
6. Favorite State Medals of Israel (27 slides)
7. Similarities between Israel's Stamps & Israel's Coins & Medals (29 slides)
8. Masada (45 slides)
9. Judaic Portrait Medals (67 slides)
10. Jewish Medals of Interest (56 slides)
11. Your Link With an Enduring Heritage (Jewish-American Hall of Fame Medals) (49 slides)
12. Trade Coins of Israel (80 slides)
13. The Modern Maccabees (54 slides)
14. Herzl and the Jewish Bank (56 slides)
15. Israel Air Force (67 slides)
16. The Menorah on Coins (36 slides)
17. Numismatics: From the Beginning (38 slides)
18. The Jewish Connection (125 slides)
19. The History of Israel in Coins (79 slides)
20. The Menorah on Stamps and Money (60 slides)

## The Editor's Page

by Edward Schuman

This issue has been mailed a few weeks ahead of time so information about The Holyland Expo in conjunction with the Las Vegas Coin, Currency and Stamp Expo at the Circus Circus Hotel May 26-28 would be received by our members in time.

We are pleased to announce that Life Member Roger J. Merritt has become a member of A.I.N.A.'s board. Roger is a long time collector of Israeli numismatics and the issuer of the Roger J. Merritt Judaic token. He will bring experience and enthusiasm to the board.

I am sorry to report the passing of Arthur Strickler, a long time collector of Judaic medals, modern medals of Israel and ancient coins of Israel. He had special interests in medals created by Paul Vince and Roman City coins depicting the foundation of a city (emperor ploughing) on the reverse. Arthur was a long time member of the INS of NY and its last secretary-treasurer serving for many years. He was involved in local politics and worked at the community board of Greenwich Village in lower Manhattan. He was about 60 years of age.

AINA has also lost a prominent member but not through attrition. Nahum Hacohen, the first Israel Director of the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp. North American office has ceased his membership because of advanced age and impaired vision. Nahum was a familiar face at many of the A.I.N.A. functions in the early years. He served AINA in many ways mediating the occurrences between Morris Bram and the IGCMC. Nahum comes from an illustrious family. His grandfather, Mordecai Ben Hacohen was prominent in the early financial affairs of the Yishuv in Palestine in the early years of the 20th century, and his uncle David Hacohen was always a speaker at the early AINA tours to Israel.

This is a diversified issue with unusual articles. Two of which were submitted by Canadian members Marvin Tameanko and Harold Alter. Donna Sims has selected Bill Rosenblum for her profile series article this issue. This has become a popular column and a good replacement for the Club Bulletin which ceased to be published because there aren't any Israel Coin clubs left any longer.

Please submit your idea of the design for the 2007 annual AINA membership medal. You could earn the \$100 prize.

Till the next issue

# PIOTRKOW

There is no known specific date for the settling of the first Jews in the town but early chronicles indicate that, in the year 1487, a law was passed in Piotrkow which put severe restrictions on Jewish merchants which forbade them to engage in any kind of commerce. Piotrkow was at that time the site where the High Tribunal met regularly to issue legislation governing all of Poland, hence the name "Piotrkow Trybunalski" (the Tribunal). In the year 1557, the "Piotrkow Constitution" was adopted; it put many restrictions on the behavior of Jews and permitted them to settle only in designated districts.

During the five centuries of its existence, this Jewish community of Poland enjoyed periods of relative tranquility, though interrupted from time to time with outbursts of vicious anti-Semitism usually attributed to the infamous "blood libel." However, despite all the anti-Semitic restrictions and persecutions emanating from the government, as well as from the church, Jews were able to develop self-government and create institutions of learning which produced some of the great scholars of the time.

Shortly before the outbreak of the second World War, the Jewish community of Piotrkow showed great progress in its communal development. In addition to its renowned religious institutions, which provided high levels of Jewish culture and education, the community also supported a Hebrew Gymnasium (equivalent to eight years of high school and junior college) and a well equipped ORT trade school. Jewish Piotrkow also maintained a sports club named "Maccabi" which was housed in its own modern building; a Jewish hospital which was well equipped and manned by trained and dedicated personnel. A large orphanage in the center of the town with beautiful gardens and play grounds, and several libraries which contained Yiddish and Hebrew books and offered spacious reading rooms where the youth of the town congregated. There was a Jewish amateur theater, three weekly Yiddish newspapers, and a Jewish musical association called "HaZamir," with Bensman, a composer renowned throughout the Jewish musical world, as its musical director.

In the middle of a late springtime Sabbath morning in the Jewish quarter, the cobblestone streets seem deserted and silent. The stores and businesses, so bustling with activity the day before, are now padlocked and covered with heavy iron shutters. Not even the ever-present "Droshkas" (horse-driven taxis) dare disturb the stillness of the Sabbath atmosphere, to a visit to the Botanical Garden to immerse ourselves in the beauty of that

park in bloom, so fitting for a relaxed Sabbath afternoon. As darkness approaches, we will all rush home for the Havdalah service, which brings this wonderful day to a spectacular end.

The Great Synagogue played a central role in the lives of generations of Piotrkow Jews. In addition to Sabbath and Holiday Services, all major events in the life of the Jewish community were observed within the massive, exquisitely decorated walls. Happy events were commemorated there, observed within its massive, exquisitely decorated walls, as were tragic occurrences. The lives of many Rabbis and outstanding scholars were eulogized there. The synagogue was also the meeting place for the community when in imminent danger of pogroms of other calamities. On only two occasions in its 150 years of existence were there no prayer services on Friday evening. The first of these happened in the year 1861, when the Czarist Russian military occupying authority closed the Synagogue after it served as the site of a memorial service for five murdered Polish Freedom Fighters. The second such time was in August, 1914, shortly after the outbreak of World War I, when Russian soldiers and their local supporters entered the Synagogue and ripped apart its furnishings with the lame excuse that they were looking for a secret telephone connection to the German Headquarters.

The Jews of Piotrkow were rightfully proud of their Great Synagogue. It was a magnificent structure built in the Moorish style. Like a fortress, it was built on the grounds where a 17th century Synagogue had previously been destroyed by Jesuit students during an anti-Semitic outburst in 1740. This Great Synagogue of Piotrkow, which was known throughout Poland for its beautiful interior, was built in the years 1791-1793. It was a massive building with exterior walls measuring one and one-half meters in thickness. Upon entering the synagogue, one first experienced subdued lighting until the eyes inevitably were struck by the breathtaking sight of the magnificent gilded artwork on the eastern wall.

The carvings, which were executed by the famous artist David Friedlander, depicted the Ten Commandments, replicas of the musical instruments which were used by the Levites in the Temple in Jerusalem and a carving of a golden crown held by two lions, used by the Levites in the Temple in Jerusalem, and a carving of a golden crown held by two lions, one on the right, the other on the left. Over the crown soared a black eagle with fully extended wings. With its beak directed to the south, the eagle faced the beautifully decorated ark containing the holy Torahs which it symbolically protected. Across from the ark stood the golden menorah with flickering lights and two cherubim on either side. Supported by four

columns, and exquisitely decorated by murals depicting the holy places in Jerusalem, stood the first and second balconies, where the women prayed.

Perhaps the most admirable of the synagogue's artwork was that which adorned the ceiling. Painted in Rococo style, using a rainbow of colors, was a tapestry of heavenly bodies and astrological signs which appeared to be moving through the firmament. Hanging from the ceilings were elegantly designed, immense, brass chandeliers, which were illuminated on various holidays. In the middle of the synagogue was a large, raised platform where the Torah was read. The cantor's pulpit was next to the ark against the eastern wall, and next to it was an enormous, handsomely carved chair of honor for the Rabbi of Piotrkow. The last man to occupy this chair was Rabbi Moshe Chaim Lau, a martyr of blessed memory. Before him our Chief Rabbi had been Meir Shapiro, founder of the world renowned Lublin Yeshiva.

It took the Jews of Piotrkow thirty years to collect the funds needed for the construction of the Great Synagogue. Many famous artists took part in its completion. In the 150 years of its existence, many of Europe's great men entered its gates and admired its beauty. Among them were the Russian Tsar Alexander the First, who visited the Synagogue on his way to the peace conference in Erfurt. Eight years before that, it was visited by the Commanding General of the French Expeditionary Army, while in retreat from Moscow; and, according to legend, the Great Synagogue of Piotrkow was visited by Napoleon Bonaparte himself.

Little now remained to bear testimony. The buildings, even if extant, had been stripped of their Jewish identity – one could be sure of that. Most of the people were no longer alive, victims of Hitler's gas chambers and crematoria. All that remain are memories

During the economic hardship and turmoil which prevailed in Europe during and after the First World War, many countries were hard pressed to provide suitable currency for everyday business. It fell to the cities and states to provide a medium for exchange. Piotrkow was no different than other parts of Europe in this respect. The town issued notgeld in the form of perforated coupons which served as money. The specimen illustrated is valued at 1 kopek and is dated 8 September 1914.



## A REVOLT

# THE STORY OF BAR KOCHBA - A HERO OR A FOOL?

Few characters are as enigmatic as Simon Bar Cosiba better known as Shimon bar Kochba. Literature and Legends abound. Historians are divided: Some call him a hero who, despite the desperate situation, tried to unite the Jewish people and overthrow the oppression of Rome. Others believe he was an egomaniac with almost Messianic illusions of grandeur. There is little accurate information written about him. Some of what we know are from the Judean Desert Documents, from Talmudic Legends, the Roman Historian Dio Cassius, and Eusebius a third Century Church historian.

Bar Kochba is inextricably tied to another towering personality of the time, Rabbi Akiva. His story reads like a novel: Akiva was the son of a convert to Judaism and worked as a shepherd for one of the wealthiest land owners, Kalba Savuah. Akiva, who was illiterate, fell in love with Calbah Savuah's daughter Rachel and they decided to marry. The enraged father drove them away and vowed never to recognize their marriage.

Rachel saw beneath the coarse exterior and encouraged him to begin studying - he was 40 years old. Within 12 years he was renowned, and within 24 years, he was the leading scholar in Judea. It was the support of Akiva which gave Bar Kochba the power to organize the revolt.

Almost 70 years after the destruction of the Temple, the Jews did not cower into submission. For the two years of 115-117CE the Jews of Egypt, Cyrene and Cyprus rose against the Roman dictator. Babylonian Jews as well unsuccessfully raised the banner of rebellion.

The date 131 CE is important because the first exile lasted for 70 years, and many people believed that the redemption was approaching. Hadrian was Emperor of Rome, and although he had no enmity to the Jews, he did believe in Romanization of the colonies including the unification of the people. More important, he believed in the worship of the Emperor. Many scholars debated these decrees and the reactions to them. There is an interesting portion of the Hagaddah of Pessach where a discussion is quoted between the leading sages of the era: Rabbis Eliezer, Joshua, Elazar ben Azaryah, Tarphon and Akiva. The discussion is about freedom and its importance. Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah is puzzled: "I am 'like' a man of 70 and I never understood why we have to tell the story also at night...." Why did he say like 70? It is generally agreed that the Rabbis of that day were planning and deciding whether to take up arms against Rome. Elazar is really saying, "Hey - it is almost 70 years! When are we

going to start organizing?"

Akiva played a decisive role, for without his backing there would have been no mass unity of the people. He met with Bar Koziva and was so impressed with the power and sense of destiny which exuded from the man that he proclaimed, "This man is destined to lead us as it is written (Numbers 24:17) 'And a star (Kochba) shall rise out of Jacob and a scepter from Israel and shall smite the corners of Moav and destroy the children of Seth."

Many of Akiva's disciples flocked to the call of Bar Kochba. Not everyone was calling for open rebellion. In the Valley of Rimonim there was a mass gathering and Joshua ben Chananya, leader of the Sanhedrin (the High Court), did his best to calm the crowd by quoting a fable: "Once there was a lion who was eating and had a bone stuck in his throat. He promised a reward to any animal who would remove the bone but no animal dared. Finally the crane stuck his long beak into the lion's mouth and removed the bone. 'Where is my reward?!" demanded the crane. 'Your reward,' growled the lion, 'is that you will be able to tell everyone you put your head in to the lion's mouth and can still talk about it.'" Yet the call for moderation blew past like a wind in the cedars'

Even Akiva was not immune from criticism. After proclaiming Bar Kochva the Messiah, Yochanan ben Torta told him "Grass will grow under your cheeks and the son of David (Messiah) will not yet have come." The Talmud relates that at first, Bar Kochva tried to test the courage of the new fighters by daring them to cut off one finger of each hand. The sages criticized him for "making cripples out of the people." "Tell me a better way," rejoined Bar Kochba. "Let each conscript, while on horseback tear a ceder tree up with his hands."

Bar Kochba's arrogance also began to bother the Sages. When preparing for battle he is alleged to have said to God "Do not help us but do not hinder us." In spite of this there is no evidence that he himself sought to be seen as a messiah. Rather he desired to return the glory that was while throwing off the yoke of foreign nations forever. His strength was legendary. One account relates how he could catch and throw back the rocks thrown in catapults between his knees.

The point of conflagration came when Hadrian, while visiting Eretz Israel decided to rebuild Jerusalem - not as the capital of the Jews but as Roman city Aleia (the name of Hadrian) Capitolina (for Jupiter Capitolinus), with the temple site to become a temple for Jupiter. It was further exacerbated by the local Roman ruler Tinneius Rufus and Hadrian's ban on circumcision which was considered abhorrent by the Romans. His departure in 130 seems to be the trigger which set off the revolt.

Most sources claim that he had between 400,000 and 500,000 troops at the time of the beginning of his revolt. Although centered in Judea, roughly from Beni Brak to Beersheva, it spread to the north as well. The war lasted three and a half years. During the first year they succeeded in pushing back the Roman 10th and 22nd legion as well as taking most of Judea including Jerusalem. Much of the time was spent digging fortification tunnels near crucial road crossings (tel Morashe, Herodion).

Hadrian realized almost too late the effect this small revolt could have on the empire. He sent for Julius Severus fresh from putting down the revolt of the Britons and one of his most able generals to quell the uprising. With him he sent the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 10th (renewed), and 11th legions.

With the Jews controlling most of Judea and parts of the Galilee, Severus wisely did not engage the Jewish army directly unless he needed to. Instead, he began to strangle the supply trail to the beleaguered nation. Bar Kochba in the meantime proved himself an able administrator who concerned himself with minute detail and would allow no disagreements with his orders. He minted coins - some depicting a four column building with a star and some with the inscription "To the freedom of Jerusalem."

Unlike the war of the Jews (the first revolt) little is known of the actual battles. One story relates how 100,000 Romans attacked the citadel at Tur Simon where they massacred everyone in sight for three days. Over 50 major battles were fought with the Romans paying steeply for every inch of territory.

After three and a half years most of the strongholds were recaptured. The last was the city of Betar located on the road between Bet Guvrin and Jerusalem. It was a large city and according to the midrash there were 400 synagogues there. Jerusalem evidently remained in the hands of the rebels until the very end. The siege lasted almost a year. It was the heart of summer, the river beds were dry and supplies were low. Despite this, Severus was discouraged. According to talmudic sources, Betar was supplied from a subterranean secret passage. One night a Samaritan went to Hadria (or his general) and told him "as long then hen cackles in ashes, Betar cannot fall".

He was referring to Eleazar of Modin who sat in sack and ashes within the fortress of Betar and prayed for God to keep the stronghold firm. According to both Midrashic and Samaritan sources, a Samaritan approached Eleazar while he was praying and pretended to whisper in his ear. Some of the officers distrusting Samaritans caught him and asked him what he told him. His reply was "I would rather face the wrath of my master than that of yours, so kill me if you like." Naturally, when they

asked Eleazer he didn't even know what they were talking about. Bar Kochba, in a fit of rage, kicked Eleazer aside. Due to the weakened condition of the Rabbi he died on the spot.

What we do know is that a traitor (according to some a Samaritan) showed the Romans a secret entrance to the fortress. The results were catastrophic. On the 9th of Av 135 CE. the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple, Betar fell. According to some sources the Romans destroyed 52 strongholds, 985 villages and killed over 580,000 people, not including incidental deaths e.g. from starvation, fire, or disease.

What happened to Bar Kochba? One Midrashic source relates that since no human had the power to kill him he was killed by a snake. An eager Samaritan cut off his head and brought it to Julius for a reward where he was brutally rebuffed being told that he was wanted alive.

The losses to the Roman army were staggering. They were so great that for the first time in Roman history, when the Emperor presented the news to the Senate, he omitted the traditional, "I and the army are well." They did, though, mint a coin with the inscription "Exercitus Judaicus."

Most of the men were hunted down and killed. The women and children were herded into the slave markets in Hebron and Azza. And the Rabbis? Hadrian banned the study of the Torah, Shabbat, Circumcision, as well as many of the basic Jewish tenets. Violation of these new persecutions had one outcome - death.

Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Ishmael, Rabbi Chanania ben Teradion, and seven more of their colleagues were condemned to death for teaching the Torah, with Rufus as the executioner. We read in detail on Yom Kippur and on the 9th of Av how each was tortured, but more how each faced death knowing there are fates worse than death.

So ends the story of Bar Kochba. Heroism or Folly? Who knows.

Renown sculptor, Paul Vincze designed the Bar Kochba Tetradrachm medal which has a view of the Beitar Fortress on the reverse.



# Can you detect the background pictures in the New Israeli Banknotes?

By: Shmuel Aviezer

Hardly. Yet, they are there. They are printed in soft-hued, pastel tones so that they do not encroach on the dominance of the effigy of the personality depicted on the front side of each denomination. As in many of past Israeli banknotes, these "shadow" pictures continue to emphasize their link to the personality adorning the banknote. The way they are now designed come to convey modernity and sophisticated artistry that endows originality and elegance to the banknotes.

To make things easier for the beholder, let us put hereunder the details of these background pictures of each banknote:

## A) NIS 20

The portrait: Moshe Sharett, first foreign Minister of Israel (1948-1956) and second Prime Minister (1954-1955).

Background pictures in the front: There are two:

One shows the ceremony at which Mr. Sharett hoisted the Israeli flag in front of the U.N. building when Israel was admitted as member on May 12, 1949. The other shows flying flags (picture by Meir Eshel).

Background pictures in the back

The lower part of the note shows volunteers in the Jewish Brigade during the Second World War, marching and carrying a banner that reads: "Join us in the fighting Jewish Brigade". (Mr. Sharett was instrumental in recruiting the Jewish Brigade).

The picture in the upper part of the note depicts the look-out tower in Kibbutz Ma'oz Haim, from the settlement period known as "Tower and Stockade" (1936-1939).

(As head of the Jewish Agency's political department at that time, Mr. Sharett contributed to the diplomatic standings of the "Tower and Stockade" settlement enterprise).

## B) NIS 50

The portrait: Shmuel Yosef Agnon, one of modern Hebrew's greatest writers and laureate of the 1966 Nobel Prize for Literature.

Background picture in the front:

Study and personal library where Agnon wrote most of his works (Picture by Avi Hayon).

Background pictures in the back:

In the lower part: Agnon writing-stand with Agnon's pen and his reading glasses (picture by Meir Eshel).

In the upper part: An aerial photograph of Jerusalem where Agnon lived and worked (picture by Duby Tal).

C) NIS 100

The portrait: Ishak Ben-Zvi, the second President of Israel (1952-1963).

Background picture in the front:

The picture shows the interior of the Tzrif, the wooden structure in Abarbanel Street, Jerusalem, which served as the President's residence (picture by Jehuda Dorfzan).

Background picture in the back:

The picture of the synagogue in the Galilee village of Peki'in appears in the lower part. Mr. Ben Zvi's investigation on the history of this village, which represents the continuity of the Jewish settlement in the Land of Israel, was the pinnacle of his research on ethnic communities in Israel (picture by David Eldan).

The picture in the upper part of the note depicts the view of Peki'in village (picture by Erich Comriner).

D) NIS 200

The portrait: Zalman Shazar, Israel's first Minister of Education (1949-1951) and third President (1963-1973).

Background picture in the front:

Pupils in an elementary school class, their faces turned to the teacher and the blackboard.

Background picture in the back:

In the lower part of the note, the picture depicts a typical alley in the town of Safed (picture by Dov Dafnai).

The picture in the upper part of the note shows the Abuhav Synagogue in Safed (picture by Ze'ev Radovan).

(The town of Safed, being a spiritual center for Kabbalists, was chosen as the motif of this banknote in view of Mr. Shazar's interest in researching the Kabbala).

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(Source: "The New Banknotes of Israel", Bank of Israel, Currency Department, Jerusalem, 1999).

## Adolf von Sonnenthal

by Harold Alter

He was, during his long career, one of the most celebrated actors on the German stage. He was born in Budapest, Hungary on December 21st. 1834 to a poor Jewish family, and was destined to become a tailor. After an initial apprenticeship, he moved at the age of sixteen to Vienna. Once there he had the opportunity to see a performance at the Burgtheater starring Bogumil Dawison. At that time Dawison was a celebrated actor and Sonnenthal decided that he too would become an actor. Encouraged by Dawison, who was also Jewish (born in Warsaw in 1818) and 16 years his senior, Sonnenthal attended dramatic classes, paying for his tuition from his wages as a tailor.

In 1851 he began his acting career with a touring company to provincial towns in Austria, Germany and Hungary. In 1856 he made his debut at the Burgtheater. The theater had been created by the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria in 1741 near her palace and it became one of the most important theaters in Europe. Sonnenthal's debut was not impressive, perhaps because he was nervous, but beginning with the second night he made a triumphant impression and was given a contract to perform there for three years. At the end of that time he was awarded a contract for life!

He performed in both comedy and tragic roles, created by Shakespeare, Ibson, Goethe, Schiller and his most celebrated role in Lessing's "Nathan the Wise".

In 1870 he was appointed stage manager and in 1887 director of the theater. 1881 was celebrated as his 25th. anniversary, and a medal was struck on this occasion. The obverse depicting his portrait, the reverse the theater. Sonnenthal was raised to the nobility and awarded the order of the Iron Cross by the emperor (the first time this honor had been awarded to an actor). He could now add "von" to his name.

In 1891, on the celebration of his 40th. anniversary, the anti-Semitic city council led by the notorious Karl Leuger refused to extend the freedom of the city to him, but his adoring public still acclaimed him, and his roles, that over the years had included that of Hamlet, Macbeth, Nero, Romeo, Faust, and of course Nathan the Wise. He visited the United States in 1885, 1899, and 1902 and toured Germany and Russia with great success.

During all this success and honors he remained close to the Jewish community. He was an officer in the Jewish movement to build a Jewish

museum to preserve the artifacts of the community . That group of influential Jews began their efforts in 1893 and culminated in their first display in 1911. Sonnenthal's name will be forever associated with the theater in Vienna and although attempts were made to induce him to be baptized, he refused. In his will he stated, "I have lived as a Jew, and want to be buried as a Jew". He died April 4, 1909 in Prague.



# WARSHIPS IN THE DESERTS OF ANCIENT JUDAEA

By Marvin Tameanko

Reading the documents of ancient Jewish history we always expect to find amazing miracles, but warships sailing across the desert sands of biblical Gilead is beyond belief. And yet there they are floating along on numerous coins of ancient Gadara, a city located in the landlocked waste lands of ancient northern Israel.



A bronze coin, 28-millimeters in diameter, struck in Gadara for the Roman emperor Commodus, AD 177-192, showing a fully equipped war galley. City Coins of Palestine by M. Rosenberger, hereafter cited as Rosenberger, Gadara 61.

Gadara was an important city in Judaea and prominent in the later Roman province of Syria. It was situated on the side of a mountain at a site now called Umm Qeis in modern-day Jordan, southeast of the Sea of Galilee (Kinneret), near the Yarmuk river valley, and 7 miles (4.5 kilometers) east of the Jordan river. A town or suburb close by this city was called Hammat Gadara (Gader in Hebrew) and it contained hot and cold mineral springs. This town became the site of several medicinal baths and a resort spa for the people living in the eastern provinces. Hammat Gader is now a modern village located in Israel, across the Yarmuk valley from ancient Gadara. It is a popular destination for tourists, not only for the springs that still flow but also for a crocodile farm located nearby. These two towns were founded in the middle of a desert distant from the sea, so it is surprising that Roman Gadara struck numerous coins featuring a fully equipped, war galley. However, with a little research into the history of Gadara and its coinage, these warships prove to be no biblical miracles and are easily explained away.

The original Hellenistic city of Gadara was probably founded by Antiochus III, the Great, 223-187 BC, on the site of an earlier, primitive 7th century BC village. The city's early titles included Antiochia and

Seleucia, referring back to the names of the Greek-Syrian kings of that era. Under the Seleukid (Syrian) kings Gadara developed into a major center for Greek culture and Hellenism. The city was noted as the residence of the Epicurean philosopher, Philodemus, the poet Meleager and the satirist Mennipus. Later, a famous scientist of the 3rd century AD, called Philo of Gadara, was honored for his calculations of the mathematical value of 'pi'. In around 100 BC, the warlike Hasmonean (Maccabaeans) king Yehonatan, called Alexander Jannaeus by the Greeks, conquered Gadara and made it into a provincial Judaean city. During the civil war that followed Jannaeus's death, his sons and successors, named Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, fought over and destroyed Gadara in 65 BC. In about 64 BC, the Romans extended their influence into the East and the general, Pompey the Great, intervened in Judaea, rebuilt Gadara, and freed its citizens from Jewish control. To replenish the devastated population Pompey settled his veteran soldiers and Roman merchants in Gadara and they gave the city the additional formal name of Pompeia, to honor their benefactor. On coins and in inscriptions the citizens of the new city referred to themselves as "the people of Pompeian Gadara." Over the years this civic epithet was used on many coins struck in Gadara and a typical example is shown on a coin struck for Elagabalus, AD 219-222. The legend on this coin is POM GAD, the abbreviation for 'of Pompeian Gadera' and the date is given by the Greek letters APC which appears in the pediment of the temple on the reverse. Such dates were designated from the year of the founding of the city by Pompey in 64/3 BC so APC is the number for year 281 after 64/3 BC, meaning AD 217/18.



A bronze coin, 25-millimeters in diameter, struck in Gadara for Elagabalus, AD 219-222, showing the main temple of the city, dedicated to Jupiter, the Roman national god. The date of this coin is AD 217/18. Rosenberger, Gadara, 84.

Despite the Roman take over and domination of the city, Gadara retained a small but influential population of Jews and did so up until its demise during the Byzantine era. The city prospered from exporting its agricultural produce, from the commerce of the nearby caravan route to Damascus, and from the income produced by the springs in Hammat

Gader. This spa contained several bath buildings erected over the springs and these facilities became famous throughout the Roman east. Taking the mineral baths at Gadara was reputedly a cure for rheumatism. An inscription discovered in Gadara in 1979 contained a poem supposedly written by the empress Eudocia, wife of Theodosius II, AD 402-450, and it heaped praise on the baths and the spa of Hammat Gader. The empress had been exiled to Jerusalem and spent the rest of her life traveling around the Holy Land and building churches and monasteries. Furthermore, these baths are mentioned in the Talmud where it lists the names of many prominent rabbis who visited the area and taught in the baths' recreation halls while 'taking the cure'. Roman baths in those times were not only used for bathing and medicinal purposes but also functioned as recreational, educational and cultural centers. Historians consider Hammat Gader to have been the Miami Beach of ancient Judaea, full of tourists seeking warmth, medicinal cures, entertainment, and also the intellectual stimulation of its scholars.

With Gadara's reputation as a Hellenistic center of literature and philosophy, embellished by Hammat Gader's fame as a recreational and medicinal spa, the city became one of the foremost cultural centers in the East. To promote and advertise this status, the predominantly pagan citizens of Gadara adopted the mythical 'Three Graces' as patron divinities of the city and its main religious cult. The Three Graces or Charities, called the 'Gratiae' by the Romans, were the fabled daughters of Zeus (Jupiter) and were represented in artwork as three beautiful maidens linked together, arm in arm. They symbolized collectively Wisdom, Joy, Glory, Beauty and Grace, and as such they became the Muses of art, poetry, music, science, and the enjoyment of life. Their names changed over the years and from society to society but their symbolism remained unaltered.

The cult of the Three Graces became so powerful in Gadara that by the late 2nd century AD, a temple or shrine had been built for them and the images of the goddesses began to appear on the city's coinage. Gadara was the only community in the Syrian-Judaean area to worship these deities and eventually they became an emblem of the city placed on its coins as a mint mark. This is especially noticeable on the silver coinage of the Severan Dynasty of the early 3rd century AD. A spectacular tetradrachm of Caracalla, AD 198-217, struck in Gadara, shows the Three Graces in a wreath as a mint mark, set between the legs of the usual imperial eagle on the reverses of the coin.

A tetradrachm of Caracalla, AD 198-217, struck in Gadara and showing the Three Graces in a wreath as a mint mark on the reverse between the legs of the eagle.



After rebuilding Gadara, the victorious general, Pompey, incorporated the city into a Roman league of ten local communities called the Decapolis. This league was a political, cultural, religious and commercial confederation of ten neighboring cities, Damascus, Philadelphia, Raphana, Scythopolis (Bet Shean), Gerasa (Geresh), Hippos, (Susita) Dion, Pella (Pehal), Canatha (Kenath) and Gadara. Pompey the Great became infamous in Jewish history because he began the destruction of the Hasmonean dynasty in Judaea and conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC. According to Josephus, in *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 14, Chapter 4. 4, Pompey violated the sanctity of the Holy of Holies in the Temple by entering the shrine but, supposedly out of respect for the religion, did not disturb or loot it. Now, this is where the Roman warships come into the story of Gadara.

Pompey was a great, multi talented warrior and before his coming to Judaea he had been the supreme commander of the powerful Roman navy. As a Roman admiral, he had successfully scoured the Mediterranean destroying the pirate fleets that threatened the economy of the eastern Mediterranean. For these victories he was awarded many honors and Pompeia Gadara, the only city ever established by Pompey in the East, commemorated his triumphs by placing a Roman warship, perhaps a representation of his own flagship, on its coinage. In fact, the first coin ever struck in Gadara, in 64/3 BC, displayed the prow and ram (rostrum) of a mighty warship to celebrate the foundation of the city by Pompey. The obverse of this coin shows the head of Hercules, possibly one the favorite god of Pompey and one of the major deities worshiped in Gadara. The date given on the coin by the sign (not the letter), 'L', standing for 'etos', and the Greek letter 'A' meaning year 1, records the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the city's re-founding.



A bronze coin, 23-millimeters in diameter, struck in Gadara. The reverse shows the prow & ram of a warship and the legend POMHS in Greek letters, the abbreviation for 'of Pompeia'. The date given is LA for year 1 or 64/3 BC. Rosenberger, Gadara 1.

After Pompey refounded the city, Gadara was given self-rule and struck autonomous coins, usually showing the turret crowned head of the Greek deity Tyche (the Roman goddess Fortuna), the protector of the city. The reverses of these coins display the designs of a caduceus, the staff of Mercury (Greek Hermes) or a large cornucopia. Both of these are symbols of prosperity through trade and commerce and may represent the fact that Gadara was growing wealthy. The city must have remained as a prosperous community for many years because it was one of the few cities in Judaea/Syria to strike enormous amounts of coins from 63 BC to AD 244, and some of them are spectacular specimens of numismatic art.



A 23-millimeter bronze coin of Gadara struck for Marcus Aurelius as Caesar under Antoninus Pius, AD 139-161, showing the city goddess, Tyche (Fortuna) standing on the reverse. The legend is GADARSON in Greek letters, meaning 'of Gadara'. The date is given as GKC for year 223, equal to AD 159/60. Rosenberger, Gadara (but attributed to Lucius Verus), 53.

The emperor Augustus, 27 BC-AD 17, returned control of Gadara to the Judaean king, Herod the Great, 40 - 4 BC, as a reward for his faithful service during the civil wars against Mark Antony and Cleopatra. However, because of the family squabbles of the successors after Herod's death in 4BC, the city was taken back by the Romans and incorporated into the province of Syria. During Herod's reign and afterwards, Gadara struck so-called 'imperial' coins showing the head of the current emperor combined with the bust of Tyche or the caduceus and the cornucopia on

the reverses. This type of coinage was struck for many years well into the 2nd century AD. A typical example is a coin struck in Gadara during the reign of Claudius, AD 41-54, showing the emperor's head on the obverse and the turreted bust of Fortuna on the reverse.



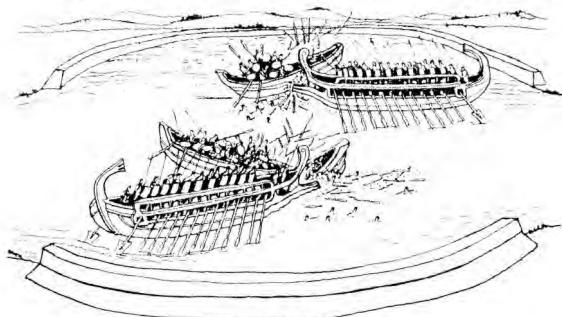
A 20-millimeter bronze coin struck in Gadara for Claudius, AD 41-54, showing the turreted bust of Fortuna on the reverse. The legend is GADARA in Greek letters and the date is given as LHP for year 108, equal to AD 44/5. Rosenberger, Gadara, 21.

The full image of a Roman war galley first appeared on coinage of Gadara during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, AD 161-180. On this occasion, the ship was probably intended to honor Pompey and to commemorate his founding of Gadara in 64/3 BC. To celebrate this event the authorities of the city arranged for a spectacle called a 'naumachia', a mock sea battle between war ships. It is possible that this first naumachia was actually held in Gadara in AD 161 to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the founding of the city. A coin struck for Marcus Aurelius in AD 161/2 depicted the image of the warship and it is a splendid, large sized coin, suitable for use as a commemorative medallion struck for such a special occasion. The inscription over the galley on the reverse is GARDAEON NAVMA in Greek letters, the abbreviation for 'The Gadarian Naumachia'. The date on the coin is given in Greek letters in the inscription as DKS, meaning year 224 or AD 161/2



A very rare medallion-like coin, 33 millimeters in diameter, struck in Gadara for Marcus Aurelius, AD 161-180, showing the war galley for the first time and probably commemorating the first naumachia held there. The reverse legend is GRADAREON NAUMA for 'The Gadarian Naumachia'. The date is given by the Greek letters DKS is AD 161/62, the first year of the emperor's reign. Rosenberger, Gadara, 42.

A naumachia was the premier and most prestigious gladiatorial event ever offered by the governors of a Roman city. It was the 'Super Bowl' of its time and an enormous, expensive undertaking involving the creation of a water-filled basin to contain the ships, the acquiring of the sailors and soldiers to act out the battle, the building of the seating for spectators around the arena, and the construction of ships, probably four or more, to create a great spectacle. The ships were probably made in the shipbuilding ports on the Sea of Galilee and then carted to Gadara in prefabricated parts to be assembled by local carpenters. The water-filled arena may have been carved out of the nearby Yarmuk (the ancient Hieromax), which was a substantial river in those days, or located on the banks of the Sea of Galilee, only 8 miles (13 kilometers) north of Gadara. It is believed that prisoners of war, rebels and criminals facing execution were forced to dress up as marines and to fight to the death on the ships. Roman professional sailors manipulated the galleys, ramming and grappling the other vessels. Any of the mock marines who escaped from the ships and reached the safety of the shore were summarily executed by their guards as a part of the show.



The author's artistic impression of a naumachia held for Gadara.

The naumachia of Gadara probably became a periodic event because the war galley appeared on many later coins struck for the emperors, Commodus, Septimius Severus, Caracalla, Elagabalus, and Gordian III. Gadara ceased striking coins in AD 244, at the end of Gordian III's reign but the naumachia festival may have continued, on a much smaller scale, long past this date even as the city declined. However Gadara, as an economically viable community, continued to exist and prospered well into the Byzantine era.



A 26-millimeter bronze coin struck in Gadara for Gordian III, AD 238-244. This was among the last series of coins struck in the city but it still commemorated the naumachia by showing the war galley. The reverse legend is POM GADAREON in Greek letters, for 'of the Pompeian Gardarians'. The date is given by the Greek letters GT below the ship, for year 303, or AD 239/40. Rosenberger, Gadara, 89.

By the end of the 4th century AD, Christianity was firmly entrenched in Gadara, probably coming from another Decapolis city, Pella, which had accepted many new Christian refugees fleeing from Roman persecutions after the Jewish revolts of AD 66 and 132. Many churches were built in Gadara to replace the pagan temples but the Jewish citizens remained as a vital component of its society and, assimilating to Roman customs, continued to function and practice their religion. In 1932 the remains of a large 5th century AD synagogue were discovered on a hill in Hammat Gader close to a bath building. This synagogue is famous today because of its mosaic floors which featured pictures of lions and inscriptions in Greek recording the names of the donors to the building and the amounts of money they gave. Mention is made of a "denarius of gold," meaning a solidus, worth 24 silver siliquae (denarii), a "tremissis," a late Roman gold coin worth one-third of a solidus, and a "scripulum," a gold coin equal to one-quarter of a solidus. As a solidus, the basic gold coin in those days, was a month's pay for a skilled worker, the amounts donated were noteworthy. One inscription mentions a Jewish donor with the title 'Comes', literally "companion," but at that time the appellation of a high official in the government. As this status and title was forbidden to Jews after AD 438, the mosaic floor must have been constructed sometime before that date.

Gadara declined economically and politically during the late Byzantine period and was finally devastated by an earthquake in AD 747. Most of the buildings were destroyed and the city was abandoned. Gadara was never mentioned again in the local history books but the site was rediscovered, explored and identified by English travelers and Bible scholars in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Major excavations of Gadara first took place under the British mandate in Palestine, beginning in 1932, and continued up until today. Over the years, the archaeologists and historians studying the ruins returned the city, and its warships, to their proper places in the pages of Jewish history.

Endnotes #1 City Coins of Eretz Israel and the Decapolis in the Roman Period by Yaakov Meshorer. #2 Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holyland by Michael Avi-Yonah Vol II, #3 Judaism in Stone, The Archaeology of Ancient Synagogues by Hershel Shanks.

## THE RIPPLES INTERNMENT CAMP

Over one hundred thousand Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria immigrated to England prior to the beginning of World War I. They were supported by private and government charity. With xenophobia running high in the early days of the war, Britain found itself burdened with Jewish refugees from Austria and Germany.

Questioning their loyalty, the British deemed thousands of these refugees "dangerous enemy aliens" and placed them in internment camps across England. Tribunals investigated them as enemies and many were interned immediately but many also were completely cleared. After the fall of France a message came from the Home Office to intern all enemy aliens. Camps were set up in England and also on the Isle of Man. There were simply too many aliens and the facilities to house them all could not be found.

In 1940 hundreds of these refugees were transferred from England to a POW camp in New Brunswick, Canada, where they were forced to live side by side with Nazi soldiers. POW Camp 70 (or Camp "B") was established on August 13, 1940, in Ripples, N.B., about 20 miles outside Fredericton. It was originally intended for Canadian internees of German and Italian descent but it was transformed into a German POW camp shortly after. The site consisted of 58 acres, which included a 15-acre fenced-in campground. It was one of 26 camps across Canada and the only one in the Maritimes. A large sign marks the location of the camp today.

Late in 1940 the first of several boatloads of Jewish refugees was relocated from Britain to Canadian camps. One group, which included students, professors, businessmen, doctors and rabbis, arrived unexpectedly at the Ripples camp. After fleeing Hitler's Germany more than a year before, these refugees were greeted by the jeers and catcalls of the German POWs. Nazi soldiers sang anti-Semitic songs to welcome them. They were all housed together.

After the pleadings of the refugees a fence was erected between the two factions inside the camp. Jewish refugees spent the better part of three years at the camp, where they took part in paid labor outings. They also set up a thriving cultural life behind the barbed wire. Thanks to their diverse backgrounds, the refugees established schools, an orchestra and even a café which was run by a former chef from London's Savoy Hotel. A total of 711 Jewish men and teenage boys came to the camp. After a year, many returned to England to join the war effort, but some stayed in

Canada or moved to the United States.

Prisoners wore uniforms with a large red dot on the front and the back so they could be identified as prisoners. The dots also served as targets for guards who might shoot at them. The internees worked mainly in the forest, cutting 2,500 cords of wood required each year to keep the 100 wood stoves in the camp burning. The internees, organized into work crews, received 20 cents per day for their labor.

While Canada had an official policy to restrict any wartime refugees from entering the country, in 1943 Ottawa relented and freed the refugees. While some eventually returned to Europe after the war, many remained in Canada.

The sole camp in eastern Canada, the Ripples camp was all but covered up by the provincial government and federal officials. All of the camps were officially clandestine, with wartime censors covering up most evidence of them in the press. Occasionally stories of escapes would leak out to the national media, but any stories had to be passed through the censors before they were published or broadcast.

When the war ended in 1945, the 52 buildings on the site were sold to individuals and businesses in the surrounding area. A small number of these buildings continue to be used today as homes or summer cottages in the Minto and Grand Lake areas.

While there are philatelic souvenirs of the camp, there are not numismatic items. A commemorative Canadian coin issued for New Brunswick's 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary illustrates the article.



# Remembering Isachar Zacharie

By Herb Geduld

Reprinted from Jewish World Review

One of the most interesting relationships President Abraham Lincoln developed during the Civil War was with an obscure Jewish podiatrist, Isachar Zacharie. Zacharie was an English Jew who had a large podiatric practice in New York and who had treated some of the best-known bunions in America, including those of Henry Clay and William Cullen Bryant.

In September of 1862, he journeyed to Washington to treat Secretary of War Edwin Stanton who recommended his services to Lincoln. Zacharie, who was described by the New York Herald as "a man distinguished by a splendid Roman nose, fashionable whiskers, an eloquent tongue... great skill in his profession, an ingratiating address... and a plentiful supply of moral courage," succeeded in doing much more than removing the pains from the President's pedal digits. He became his close friend and confidant. In a September 24, 1864 editorial, the New York World described Zacharie as having "enjoyed Mr. Lincoln's confidence perhaps more than any other private individual... (and was) perhaps the most favored family visitor at the White House."

In a short time, Zacharie's reputation spread and he started removing corns from the feet of Union Army Generals McClellan, Banks and Burnside as well as various cabinet members. The Union remained standing — comfortably — because of the efforts of this Jewish podiatrist.

In January, 1863, Zacharie was sent by Lincoln on a special mission to New Orleans, then under the military governorship of General Banks. Other than removing a few corns on Banks' feet, Zacharie did very little podiatry there, but reported directly to the President on the state of affairs in the occupied city. He also acted as an intermediary between the military government and the civilian population, and was of substantial assistance to the New Orleans Jewish community.

In March, 1863, Zacharie returned to Washington to report to Lincoln, and in the next five or six months he conducted highly secret negotiations for Lincoln and his cabinet on proposals for a negotiated peace with the Confederacy. The cabinet, led by Secretary of War Seward, was very cold to these proposals, but Lincoln went over their heads and personally arranged for safe passage for Zacharie to Richmond, the capital of the Confederacy.

Zacharie conferred there with Judah P. Benjamin, the Jewish Secretary of State for the Confederacy and other leading Confederate officials. He returned to Washington happy in the thought that his meeting "was of the most friendly nature." Unfortunately, we know nothing about the actual proposals which Zacharie presented to the Confederacy or their specific reply. President Lincoln was delighted with the proposals, but the cabinet, containing many radicals who were determined to destroy the South, was not, and after a number of months, the plan fell into obscurity.

Frustrated as a peacemaker, Zacharie returned to New York to resume cutting toe nails instead of deals. He was honored at a testimonial dinner by the Jewish community and continued to work in local politics for Lincoln's re-election. He wrote to Lincoln on numerous occasions and many of his letters are on file in the Todd Lincoln Archives in the Library of Congress. Zacharie's last written communication from Lincoln was two months before Lincoln's assassination in 1865, when the President granted Zacharie a pass to visit part of his family who had lived in Savannah, Georgia throughout the war.

After Lincoln's death, Zacharie dropped back into obscurity, eventually returning to England, where he died in 1897. His enigmatic role as friend, emissary, politician and spy for Lincoln is a mostly forgotten piece of Americana.



The numismatic connection is a rare T-61 Confederate States of America \$2.00 bill with the portrait of Judah P. Benjamin. President Abraham Lincoln asked Isachar Zacharie to secretly meet with Benjamin offering proposals to end the Civil War

# The Jewish Community in Oran, Algeria

Oran is the second largest city in Algeria and a major trading and industrial center. Called Wahran (also spelled Ouahran) in Arabic, Oran is located in Western Algeria near the border with Morocco at a point where Algeria is closest to the Spanish coast. The first mention of a Jewish community in Oran dates from 1391, when Jewish refugees arrived in the city having escaped the anti-Jewish persecutions in Spain. The Jewish population of Oran increased towards the end of the 15th century with the arrival of immigrants from Spain. In 1492 and again in 1502 Oran received groups of Spanish refugees, both Jews and Muslims, fleeing from forcible conversion to Christianity.

In 1509 Oran was captured by Spain in a military campaign launched at the initiative of Cardinal Ximenes (Jimenes) de Cisneros (1436-1517), the Archbishop of Toledo. Although the first intention of the Spanish troops was to expel the Jews from the city, it was not long before a few families were allowed live in the region. Oran remained under Spanish dominance for most of the next three centuries. In Spain and its colonies there was a total ban on Jewish presence and crypto-Jews were persecuted by the Inquisition. In Oran, the Spanish monarchs tolerated for much of the 16th and 17th centuries the existence of a small but influential Jewish community. Thus the small Spanish enclave of Oran along with the nearby port of Mers el-Kebir remained the only place in which the old Spanish *convivencia* of Christians, Muslims and Jews continued for another century and a half. A list from 1530 mentions about one hundred twenty five Jews of Oran as enjoying the protection of the King of Spain and another seventy two Jews who lived in the area and who did not enjoy the same legal status. The Jewish population stayed within the same limits for most of the first half of the 17th century, including a number of "foreign" (*forasteros*) Jews who were permitted to reside in the Spanish territory.

The Jews of Oran lived in a distinct of the city where they had a synagogue and continued the practice of Judaism openly. They also maintained relations with other Jewish communities in North Africa and around the Mediterranean. These relations along with a knowledge of both the Arabic and Spanish languages turned into important assets that contributed to the commercial success of the Jews of Oran. Their contribution to the local economy as agents and mediators between the Spanish enclave and the Muslim hinterland assured them the protection of the royal authorities against the Inquisition.

In 1669 the Spanish Queen Maria of Austria decided to expel all the

Jews of Oran and its vicinity. The Jewish population, estimated at about 450 persons, was given eight days to leave the city. They traversed the Mediterranean for Nice, then under the control of the Dukes of Savoy, and from there some continued to Livorno, in Italy, where they joined the local Jewish community. The synagogue of Oran was converted into a church.

Jews could return to Oran only in 1708, when the Muslims led by the Bey of Mascara, Mustapha ben Yussef, also known as Bou Shlahem captured the city. The Spanish rule returned to Oran in 1732 and it appears that some Jewish individuals were permitted from time to time to enter Oran and even sojourn there. On the night of October 8/9, 1790, Oran was destroyed by a catastrophic earthquake that caused thousands of casualties. The Spaniards were not interested in rebuilding the city; two years later Spain abandoned Oran and passed it on to Mohammed el Kebir, the Bey of Algiers. The city suffered even more when the remaining population was decimated by a plague epidemic in 1794.

Following the restoration of the Muslim governance over Oran, the Jews from the neighboring city of Tlemcen, as well as from Mostaganem, Mascara, and Nedroma responded to the invitation of the Bey of Algiers and settled in Oran. The emerging Jewish community was granted land for a cemetery in the district of Sidi Shaaban. During the early years of the 19th the Jewish population of Oran grew with the arrival of Jews from other cities in Algeria and Morocco who were attracted by the new commercial opportunities between Oran and the ports of the Iberian Peninsula - Gibraltar, Malaga, Almeria, as well as Italy and southern France.

The Jewish community was governed by a *mokdem* (or *mukkadem*, a term that sometimes was understood as being the equivalent of the Hebrew title of *nagid*, head of the Jewish community) who was assisted by a council called in Hebrew "tovey-ha'ir". The *mokdem* was named by the bey and his main task was to represent the interests of the Jewish community in its relations with the Turkish authorities. The *mokdem* was responsible for the payment of the taxes by the Jewish community and he enjoyed an extensive authority over the community. He named the other members of the community leadership, controlled their activities, and raised new taxes. All disputes among the community members, including marriages and divorce, were decided by the *dayanim* (religious judges), with the exception of criminal matters or disputes between Jews and Muslims, who were decided by a *qadi* (Muslim judge).

The security of the Jewish community in Oran was sometimes threatened by political rivalries between the local Muslim leaders and the central Turkish authorities in Algiers, and by the growing interference of

the European powers, especially France. In 1805 many Jews of Oran fled to Algiers fearing the aftermaths of a local rebellion. In 1813 some Jews who sided with a local pro-French bey, who rebelled, were executed and other families were deported to Medea, when Oran returned to Turkish central control. In July 1830 Oran was secured by the French troops who prevented a Turkish plan of massacring and deporting the local Jewish population. The event, who later was remembered as the Oran Purim. The Jewish community of Oran used to commemorate the Oran Purim by reading the *piyyut* in the city's synagogues every year on Shabbat before the 9th of Av.

At the time of the French entrance to Oran in 1831 the great majority of the city population was Jewish. According to a census conducted by the French there were about 2,800 Jews in Oran, well ahead of the local Christians and Muslims who together amounted to about 1,000 inhabitants. Under the French rule that lasted until the Algerian independence in 1962, Oran turned into a modern port and the adjacent strategic town of Mers el-Kebir became a major naval base.

The French administration abolished the old system of government of the community and instead the French system of *consistoire* was introduced. The Jewish community was governed by a Grand Rabbin and a president. A *Beth Din* (Jewish religious court) was established by the French in 1836. After 1860 the number of Jews in Oran augmented with the arrival of new Jewish settlers, mainly refugees from Tetuan in Morocco who fled the ravages of the Spanish-Moroccan war of 1859-1860. By the mid 19th century there were about 5,000 Jews in Oran.

The community was administrated by a *consistoire* that had a president and some ten members elected from the local notables. The religious functions were performed by a Grand Rabbin. During the mid 19th century there were seventeen synagogues in Oran but only belonged to the community while the others were private foundations run by the descendants of the original donor who decided who could attend them.

A major change in the legal status of the Jews of Oran, and indeed of the other Jewish communities of Algeria, resulted from the implementation of the law of October 24, 1870, generally known as the Cremieux Decree after Adolphe Cremieux (1796-1880), the Jewish French Minister of Justice at the time. The Cremieux Decree granted full French citizenship to all Jewish inhabitants of Algeria. Four years later the law was restricted to only those Jews who either they or their parents were born in Algeria before the French conquest of 1830. French citizenship gave all male Jews the right to participate in the local municipal elections. Given the high percentage of Jews in the general population of Oran and its region, the

newly acquired French citizenship transformed the Jews into an important electoral force. Their electoral impact was even stronger as they generally voted homogenously at the instructions of their leaders.

By the mid 19th century, Oran had developed an anti-Jewish atmosphere. Old anti-Jewish bias brought to Oran by Catholic settlers from Spain and France were exploited frequently by local politicians. The first anti-Jewish organization was founded in July 1871 as a direct reaction to the granting of French citizenship to Jews. Anti-Jewish attacks in the local press and even anti-Jewish physical violence preceded by almost two decades the riots exacerbated by the outbreak of the Dreyfus affair. The anti-Jewish campaign had many supporters in Algeria, especially in Oran. In May 1897 the Jewish quarter and many Jewish shops were attacked by both European settlers and local Muslims. Several Jewish policemen were laid off and Jewish patients were expelled from public hospitals. However, the French authorities refused to cancel the Cremieux Decree which was the principal demand of the anti-Jewish parties and organizations. The anti-Jewish incitement declined after 1902, when the radical anti-Jewish party lost the municipal elections, but Oran remained a major bastion of anti-Semitism in North Africa.

Although massive Jewish support and participation in WWI helped to calm the attacks against the Jews, anti-Semitic attacks returned during the 1920's only to worsen in the late 1930's. In 1936 there were new violent attacks against Jews in Oran and its department. When France was defeated by Germany in June 1940, Algeria remained under the jurisdiction of the pro-Nazi Vichy government. The introduction of anti-Semitic legislation followed shortly. In October 1940 the Cremieux Decree was revoked and the Jews of Algeria lost their French citizenship. In March 1941 the racial laws of the Vichy government started to be implemented in Algeria. Jews were expelled from all organizations and associations. They were denied the practice of liberal professions - physicians, lawyers, realtors, insurance agents, nurses, chemists, teachers and educators. Jews were allowed to teach only in Jewish educational institutions, like Alliance Israelite Universelle. Jewish children were expelled from elementary and secondary schools, and the number of Jewish students was set up at three percent. Some Jews, especially young students, joined the anti-Fascist Resistance.

In 1942 the Jewish community of Oran sheltered a group of 150 Jews from Libya that had been deported by the Italian Fascist authorities. The landing of the American troops in November 1942 in Oran, one of the main objectives of the Allied invasion of North Africa, ended the anti-Jewish persecutions. Although the racist laws were cancelled relatively quickly, the

appointment as Governor of Algeria of Marcel Peyrouton, a former minister of the interior in the Government of Vichy and signatory of the anti-Jewish laws of 1940, delayed the restoration of the full civic rights of the Jews. The Cremieux Decree was reintroduced only one year later, in November 1943, when Charles de Gaulle took over the control of Algeria and after direct intervention from the American administration. Some Jews joined the Allied armies, especially the military units of Free France and participated in the invasion of Corsica and then of southern France, at Toulon, as well as in the campaign in Italy

According to the Evian Accords that ended the Algerian war, the Jews were considered European settlers. Legislation adopted by the newly independent Algeria granted Algerian citizenship only to those residents whose father or paternal grandfather were Muslims. The great massacres against the European population in June 1962 brought about the immediate exodus of the Jewish community of Oran during the following months. The departure of the few Jews left in Oran continued throughout the decade with less than 400 still living in the city in 1968. The great majority emigrated to France with Israel as their second main destination. The Great synagogue was converted into a mosque in 1975. By the early 2000's there do not seem to have been any Jews living in Oran.

The illustrated French Algerian Currency Note was issued by the Jewish Chambre of Commerce D'Oran for 5 Centimes in 1916 to alleviate the hard currency shortage as a result of the World War. It shows two Stars of David on the obverse.



# THE LAST ROMANTIC ZIONIST GENTILE

Adapted from an article by Dr. Yoav Tenembaum

Winston Churchill (1874-1965) strenuously opposed restrictive legislation on immigration into England, mainly affecting Jews. In 1904-5 he supported the Saturday Closing and Sunday Opening Bills and fought for specific Jewish educational rights. As early as 1908, he expressed his "full sympathy with the historical aspirations of the Jews" to restore "a center of racial and political integrity" in Palestine. As Colonial Secretary, he virtually cut off Trans-Jordan from the Palestine Mandated territory (1921), and in the Churchill White Paper (1922) formulated what he believed would remain the basis of Anglo Jewish cooperation. His subsequent attacks against the measures proposed in the Passfield White Paper of 1939 were based on the premise that they constituted a breach of an agreed policy expressed in his own White Paper. Under his premiership during World War II, Britain maintained her respective policy in Palestine, but his memoirs reveal that while concentrating single mindedly on winning the war and wishing to avoid disagreement with his colleagues, he maintained his pro-Jewish attitude throughout. He was one of the first in Britain to insist on recognition of the State of Israel.

Much has been written on Churchill's attitude towards the Jews and the Zionist movement prior to the establishment of the State of Israel. But not much is widely known on Churchill's attitude towards Zionism and the State of Israel after 1948.

Referring to the years prior to the creation of the Jewish state, the historian Bernard Wasserstein argues that "No British statesman had a more consistent and more emphatic record of...support for Zionism as a solution to the Jewish problem than Winston Churchill." Churchill considered the establishment of the State of Israel "as one of the most hopeful and encouraging adventures of the 20th century." Only eight months subsequent to the proclamation of the State, Churchill suggested to the House of Commons that "The coming into being of a Jewish State in Palestine is an event in world history to be viewed in the perspective not of a generation or a century, but in the perspective of a thousand, two thousand or even three thousand years."

Churchill used to trace his Zionism back to the days of the Balfour Declaration, describing himself as "an old Zionist." His attitude toward Zionism remained as passionate and as explicit following his return to Ten Downing Street in 1951. Now, however, with the State of Israel firmly in place, the images he entertained became perhaps more vivid, more colorful, and as ever imbued with historical resonance. Thus, in June 1954, Churchill

stated to journalists in the United States, "I am a Zionist, let me make that clear. I was one of the original ones after the Balfour Declaration and I have worked faithfully for it." This was merely the introduction. He went on: "I think it is a most wonderful thing that this community should have established itself so effectively, turning the desert into fertile gardens and thriving townships, and should have afforded refuge to millions of their co-religionists who suffered so fearfully under Hitler, and not only under Hitler, persecution. I think it is a wonderful thing." In a conversation with Israel's Ambassador in London, Eliyahu Elath, Churchill referred to Israel's population as "the sons of the prophets dwelling in Zion."

Churchill's attitude toward Zionism and the State of Israel was distinctively positive, the images he entertained bordering on the romantic. In this respect, Churchill had no equal among British politicians and officials in the first half of the 1950s. On almost any question pertaining to the country, Churchill's rhetoric, more than any other decision-maker or official, was distinctively pro-Israel, reflecting, beyond political considerations and a pure judgment of principle, an emotional attachment to that country and the case it presented.

Thus, on the Suez Canal blockade by Egypt against Israel in 1956, Churchill made it clear to the Foreign Office that "I do not mind it being known here or in Cairo that I am on the side of Israel and her ill-treatment by the Egyptians." On the fate of Jerusalem, Churchill urged Evelyn Shuckburgh, Assistant Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, "You ought to let the Jews have Jerusalem; it is they who made it famous."

While still Prime Minister, Churchill argued that there was no better army in the Middle East than the Israeli Defense Force, and wished to rely on Israel rather than the Arab states in setting up a regional system of defense against the Soviet Union. He insisted that Israel should be supplied with more jet aircraft than either the defense establishment or the Foreign Office wished. He went on to stress his point by telling his Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, "To me the greatest issue in this part of the world is not deserting Israel." In this context, he warned Eden against following in the footsteps of one of his predecessors. "Ernest Bevin, being temperamentally anti-semitic, made the first mistake of backing Egypt against Israel....I hope...that we both equally condemn the Bevinite anti-semitic policy."

More remarkable still, Churchill was in favor of Israel joining the British Commonwealth. "Do not put that out of your mind," he said to Shuckburgh. "It would be a wonderful thing. So many people want to leave us; it might be the turning of the tide."

Churchill's was Israel's best friend, and as a friend his attitude was shaped by sentiment as much as by pragmatic considerations. He was emotionally attached to Israel and its people, and his stance was a corollary of this. His oft-repeated, self-declared Zionist sympathies, his emotional attachment to the Jewish people and their restored sovereign entity, permeated his attitude toward Arab-Israeli disputes. He was, perhaps the last romantic Zionist Gentile. Or the last romantic Zionist.

There have been many medals honoring Sir Winston Churchill and commemorative coins issued with his portrait. We have illustrated a medal issued by the Franklin Mint in 1965 as a memorial to Churchill whose death occurred that year. The legend "The Man of the Century" appears on the top of reverse side, and the words "In War, Resolution, In Defeat, Defiance, In Victory, Magnanimity, In Peace Good will. Honorary Citizen of the United States"



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# The Odessa Horrors

A series of violent pogroms against the Jews of Russia occurred one hundred years ago this past November. THE AGE is the name of the newspaper, published in Melbourne, Australia from which the news of this horrible event was published. This story is republished from their archives.

LONDON, 6th November, 1905

The sanguinary disturbances which commenced at Odessa immediately after the promulgation of the Czar's reform manifesto culminated on Friday in unprecedented atrocities against the Jewish inhabitants, who were massacred wholesale with the most fiendish cruelties. The Russian troops either quietly permitted or actively assisted in the slaughter and pillaging. Three hundred Jewish shops were wrecked, the number of wounded taken to the hospitals was 5600, and even on Saturday, when order was being gradually restored, there were 500 casualties.

On Friday gangs of ruffians, headed by policemen and soldiers, sacked all the Jewish houses in the Moldavanka and Slobodka suburbs of Odessa. The occupants were treated with the most ferocious cruelty. Many were felled and decapitated with axes; nails were hammered into the heads of others. The eyes of Jews were gouged out, their tongues were wrenched out with pincers. Jewish children were torn from limb to limb, and the brains of others were dashed out against the walls. The corpses of the dead were hurled out of the windows, and every Jewish house was destroyed. Aged and sick Jews, who were discovered hiding in cellars, were soaked in petroleum, set on fire, and thus incinerated.

The police and the soldiers, who led the mobs, appropriated the cash found in the Jewish houses, leaving the furniture as the spoil of the mob. The most fearful outrages were committed, many Jewish women being disemboweled by the fiendish murderers. The populace in the lowest quarters of Odessa attacked the students, many of whom were saved by the citizen militia, who turned out to interfere. However, the police seized the militiamen's revolvers, and shot them down with their own weapons, leaving a free field to the bloodthirsty "Hooligans." The police even fired upon a Red Cross ambulance to prevent assistance being given to the wounded. They also helped to rob the dead.

Altogether only 120 of the "Hooligan" miscreants were killed during the outbreak. When all was over, the Jews slaughtered and their shops looted, the Governor issued a proclamation to warn disturbers of the peace and pillagers that they would be severely dealt with!

During the outbreak a Russian officer begged his superiors to give him a company of troops for the purpose of stopping the slaughter. The authorities refused the request, declaring that the Christians (?) must be allowed to vent their feelings, which had been outraged by Jews spitting at the Czar's portrait and insulting the Russian flag. The officer again protested against the massacre of peaceful citizens as inexcusable, and declared that officers were dishonoring the army in knowingly conniving at such slaughter. The officer was arrested forthwith on a charge of "insulting his superiors."

Further reports with respect to the Odessa troubles indicate that there was a good deal of fighting, and the excuse of the local authorities for the outrages perpetrated is that the Jewish inhabitants were really revolutionaries.

Machine guns were used at Odessa on Friday in repelling an attempt, it is alleged, to release 1000 criminals from gaol. Russian officers declare that shots from the windows of the houses of Jews exasperated the troops, and that the police were sent to the Jewish quarter with a Maxim machine gun, which was used intermittently until 3 o'clock in the morning.

Twelve thousand people were wounded, and probably 3500 killed. General Treppoff has issued stringent orders to the military in the province for the restoration of order. The outbreaks in the country centres are gradually subsiding, and traffic is being resumed on the railways.

Throughout the Russian empire strike riots and attacks upon the Jews have occurred. In Transcaucasia, at Baku on the Caspian, and Batoum on the Black Sea, at Yaroslav north and Novosykov west of Moscow, at Archangel on the White Sea, at Alexandrovsk and Bakhmut in Ekaterinoslav on the Sea of Azov, the gravest disorders prevailed. At Hughesovna hundreds of armed Jews, it is reported, attacked a factory owned by an English company because the workmen employed there would not join in the strike. Several men were killed in the conflict which ensued.

At Kazan on the Volga and Rostov in Ekaterinoslav, Cossacks and police aided the roughs to plunder and massacre. At Minsk, west of Moscow, a collision took place between the military and the populace, in which 100 of the latter were killed and 600 wounded. The Minsk municipal council subsequently passed a resolution censuring the military authorities for their illegal action in firing on the people, and forwarded the protest to the Premier. Count de Witte, in reply, has promised that an inquiry shall be held into the affair.

At Sebastopol, in the Crimea, the Social Democrats rallied up in strength and restored order when the ruffian element began rioting and

pillaging. The naval commandant, Rear-Admiral Tchuchin, has thanked the Social Democrats for their action.

At Moscow the revolutionary students and the reactionary loyalists came into hostile collision in the streets and exchanged revolver shots, many on both sides being killed. In Poland, though there was little, if any, disturbance, reform demonstrations were made everywhere, and the troops made no attempt to check them. At Warsaw a national Polish procession paraded the streets for two hours yesterday, and was watched by 200,000 spectators. Order was preserved, not by police or soldiers, but by civic guard. At Lodz, the great strike centre west of Warsaw, the day passed off with similar quietness, although the funerals of the victims of the late disturbances took place that day.

At Kieff, an important city in southern Russia, where a few days ago it was officially reported that there had been collisions between the troops and revolutionaries, with a few casualties, there has been a massacre of Jews on the same extensive scale, and of the same atrocious character, as that at Odessa. A letter from a medical practitioner at Kieff which has obtained publicity, states that 2,000 Jews were killed or wounded in that city, and that 1000 women and children were outraged or strangled. The massacres were, this letter declares, not the mere result of mob outbreaks, but were organized by the Government and one of the Grand Dukes of the Russian imperial family.

A three ruble banknote dated 1905, the year of this outrage, serves as the numismatic illustration.



## THE NATIONAL JEWISH HOSPITAL IN DENVER

Following the discovery of gold near Pike's Peak in 1858, fortune seekers began arriving in Colorado in droves. Many of these Colorado pioneers were of German-Jewish origin and were part of a larger immigration of Jewish people seeking a more favorable way of life. These hardworking and respected community members took leading roles in civic, cultural, philanthropic and political affairs.

By the late 1800s, Colorado and the American Southwest had become famous for the health benefits of a dry, sunny climate. Hundreds of people with tuberculosis (TB) descended upon Denver in hopes of finding a miracle cure for what was then the nation's leading cause of death. Consequently, many TB sufferers spent the last of their savings coming to this region. In Denver, victims of TB were literally dying in the streets. Boarding houses often banned "lungers," as they were called.

One of the first people to conceive of a free hospital for medically indigent TB victims in Denver was Frances Wisebart Jacobs. (1843-1892). Also, known as the "Mother of Denver Charities," Frances was the President of the Hebrew Benevolent Ladies Society, known today as Jewish Family Service of Colorado, and an officer of the nonsectarian Ladies' Relief Society.



In 1887 she spearheaded the creation of the Charity Organization Society, which became a federation of charities that coordinated fund-raising and other efforts and shared the proceeds. This was the model that led to the creation of today's United Way, which recognizes Frances as its founder. Frances also founded Denver's first free kindergarten to help poor children and in 1994, Frances was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. Her philanthropic works were so respected and appreciated that her stained glass image, adorns the dome of Colorado's state capitol in the

company of 15 other prominent Colorado pioneers.

Frances left her most enduring mark in the area of tuberculosis relief. No facilities existed to provide treatment or shelter to these victims. Unafraid to touch the ill, Frances would help them when they fell on the street, get them to a physician and pay for treatment. However, as there was no place for tubercular individuals to stay during treatment, many were transported to the local jail.

It was obvious that the Denver community at large was not very sympathetic to the plight of needy TB sufferers, and many argued that "we can't blacken the name of the city" by making it a TB refuge.

Although her vision was on its way to becoming a reality, Frances did not live to see the hospital built. She became ill with pneumonia. Instead of following her physician's advice to stay home and recuperate, Frances kept to her calling and continued to provide assistance for the medically indigent of Denver. Frances died in the spring of 1892, at the age of 49. She was widely mourned, and over 4,000 people attended her funeral. The memorial service, which was open to all faiths, was presided over by Rabbi Friedman and three leading Christian clergyman. Guest speakers also included the governor of Colorado, the mayor of Denver, and other prominent Denverites.

The laying of the hospital's cornerstone on October 9, 1892 drew huge crowds. It was decided to name the hospital Frances Jacobs Hospital in memorial to Frances. Rabbi Friedman's speech during the ceremony stressed the non-sectarian nature of the new hospital and its wide-reaching goal of providing relief to the indigent sufferers of TB. Unfortunately, due to the combination of the "Silver Crisis of 1893" and a national depression in the 1890s, the hospital did not open and sat vacant for a number of years.

Given the economic situation in the late 1800s few people had the financial means for private care and it was unthinkable to Rabbi Friedman that a newly constructed medical building remain empty. He found support from local members of B'nai B'rith, a philanthropic arm of the Jewish Community. In 1895, Louis Anfenger, the district president of B'nai B'rith lobbied for the organization to adopt the TB institution as a national project. The focus of the institution became larger than just Denver itself. Their plan was to accept patients from all parts of the nation and eventually the world.

When it did open on December 10, 1899, it had a new name -- National Jewish Hospital for Consumptives. While a project of the B'nai B'rith, the renamed National Jewish Hospital was non-denominational. The first patient was a Protestant Swedish woman from Minnesota. To reflect its openness to the impoverished of every background, National Jewish

adopted the motto: "None may enter who can pay-none can pay who enter"

In 1907, The Denver Sheltering Home for Jewish Children was founded. The Home was a refuge for poor children who had lost their parents to tuberculosis, or whose parents lay sick for years in nearby National Jewish Hospital trying to recover from the deadly disease. The institution's name was changed to the National Home for Jewish Children in Denver in 1928. In 1953, the name was changed to the Jewish National Home for Asthmatic Children at Denver. By that time, the Home's purpose had evolved to being a treatment center for children with asthma - regardless of their religion. In 1973, the name National Asthma Center was adopted. Under both names, the institution gained a reputation nationally and internationally for its asthma care and research.

In 1978, the National Asthma Center merged with the National Jewish Hospital and Research Center to become the National Jewish Hospital / National Asthma Center (NJH/NAC).

In 1949, the hospital was fifty years old. To commemorate the Golden Anniversary a medal was struck. On the obverse is a high relief logo of the hospital. The legend reads "National Jewish Hospital At Denver Golden Anniversary". The medal states on the reverse the hospital motto "None May Enter Who Can Pay...None Can Pay Who Enter...50 Years Of Health and Hope 1899-1949".



# HaGIBOR SPORT CLUB MEDAL & PRZEMYSL

The first confirmed reports of Jews in Przemysl date from the turn of the 14th century, when they began to settle along the trade route to Lvov. In the Middle Ages Przemysl Jews were moneylenders and also made their living from handicraft and trade. In 1559 King Sigismund Augustus granted Jews the privilege of legal autonomy. When Przemysl was part of the Austrian Empire it became a center of the Haskalah, which placed it in direct opposition to the numerous neighboring centers of Chasidism. The proportion of Jews in the population of Przemysl at the beginning of the 20th century never exceeded about 30%.

The Jewish athletes began their activity in Przemysl a number of years before the First World War broke out. A group of Jewish gymnasium students with Zionist awareness, lead by Zvi Luft and M. Gottfried, decided to realize the ideas of Dr. Nordau about the "Jews of Muscle" and organized the sports club "Hashachar" – whose symbol was blue and white. The only sport they engaged in at that time was soccer. There were not able to purchase a sports facility without support from the public, which was still not supportive of the Jewish youth's physical renaissance and belittled what was then known as sport. The youngsters made use of the little they had and used the city grazing field without permission, and were often chased away during their training by the shepherds.

When the First World War began in 1914, the club's activity ceased. In 1919 "Hagibor" ("the Hero") was founded upon the initiative of a group of energetic and ambitious youths. They organized a group of Jewish sports fans and thanks to the contributions and the enthusiasm of the young athletes, "Hagibor" progressed from one year to the next. The soccer team rapidly rose from the Third League to the Second League in the national soccer association of Eastern Galicia. At first "Hagibor" practiced in the open field, but at the beginning of 1926 the municipal council decided to give "Hagibor" a 5000 square meter area of municipal land on the right bank of the San River. With great enthusiasm, the "Hagibor" activists quickly erected a sophisticated sports ground, which included a soccer field, a running track, a tennis court, a seating gallery, and changing rooms



for the bathers and swimmers in the near by San river. Since the establishment of the sports field, hundreds of young Jewish men and women would throng to the field for training in all branches of sports: soccer, basketball, tennis, athletics, gymnastics, swimming and so forth. The new conditions bore fruit: "Hagibor" rose to the top of the Second League in soccer. The illustrated medal was awarded in 1936.

During Succoth of 1937, under the auspices of the "Maccabi" organization in Poland, of which "Hagibor" was a member, a day of Jewish sports events was held in Przemysl. Hundreds of "Hagibor" members competed in all branches of sports on this day. The event became a sporting event celebrated by all the Jewish population in the town.

The war reached Przemysl on 7 September 1939, when the first bombs struck the city. Many people, Jews and non-Jews, escaped from the city to the East. The Germans entered the town for the first time on 15 September 1939. Repressions and humiliations, aimed at the Jewish population, started almost immediately. Around 20,000 Jews still lived in Przemysl at that time, including refugees from western Poland. The Germans started to arrest members of the Jewish intelligentsia: physicians, lawyers, industrialists and merchants, refugees from the West and Jewish political activists. People were removed from their houses by members of an *Einsatzkommando* of the *Sipo (Sicherheitspolizei)*, or were seized on the streets, and were then driven together to be shot in the woods surrounding Przemysl. The corpses were buried in communal graves.

Under Soviet rule, in April and May 1940, approximately 7,000 Jews were deported from Soviet occupied Przemysl to the Soviet interior, mostly refugees from the West. Under Nazi occupation again, the living conditions of the Jewish population of the town deteriorated rapidly. Jewish community institutions, factories and shops (only 10% of which were owned by non-Jews) ceased to operate, and their assets were nationalized. All raw materials and merchandise were seized by the new government. Artisans were forced to "voluntarily" enter cooperatives. All privately owned houses were transferred to the city administration.

Immediately after the liberation of Przemysl, the few survivors left their hiding places. At first there were some 100 people in all, but during the next days the number of survivors grew to a maximum of 250. It is estimated that only 400 Przemysl Jews survived the Holocaust in Przemysl itself, Russia, Poland and in other countries.

## **PROFILE OF A DEALER - LIKE FATHER - LIKE SON**

Every collector of Judaica/Israel knows the name of William Rosenblum and if you have been a collector for a good number of years, you would remember that Bill's father Carl was also a dealer (Carl spent over 20 years in the business of buying and selling Israel coins and medals). Growing up in West Orange, New Jersey, Bill was a serious collector of stamps and baseball cards long before becoming interested in collecting coins. Venturing into New York City with a friend, Bill would attend large stamp shows at the Coliseum.

Bill attended Nasson College in Springdale, Maine and later switched to the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut where he majored in History (as irony would have it, both of these colleges ended up in bankruptcy but Bill attests that he had nothing to do with that). Having knowledge in history certainly helped Bill years later when he began his coin business. It was during his college days at Bridgeport that Bill met his then future wife Rita. They have two children and two grandchildren and have been married for nearly 40 years. It was in 1971 that they moved to Denver and it was there that Bill began his numismatic knowledge and business. Rita has been a major part of the family business where she keeps the books, takes the digital photos, and buys and sells some of the more traditional monies.

Becoming involved with and learning numismatics of Israel as a profession was a lucky happenstance according to Bill. His first and most particular customer was the family pediatrician where, on an appointment, he learned that the doctor collected coins of Israel and had a list of items he was looking for. Bill sent the list off to his dad and once received, the doctor examined each and every coin under a high-powered research microscope. It was right after this happened that Bill attended a coin show in Colorado Springs looking for Israel coins. Armed with little knowledge or money, and a price list or two, Bill did not quite know what to expect. There he met Dock Klein, of Albuquerque, New Mexico, who had a large inventory of Israel coins, medals and banknotes.

In the next year and a half, Bill concentrated on building his business while working various "real" jobs, learning as much as he could about Israel coins and the coin business. His dad of course was his biggest booster and teacher. Bill learned from him enough of what he needed to know, along with the occasional cash advance, numerous introductions and much needed advice. It was during this time period that Bill traveled to New York City to attend his first AINA show. The late Morris Bram, AINA's first president, offered Bill some sage advice, to branch out from just handling Israel coins. Over the years, overlooking any disagreements, the two of them jointly agreed that Israel numismatics, the New York Yankees and good scotch were three very important things in life.

Being new in the coin business, Bill experienced several life and business experiences: in one of his first lists, he spelled Israel wrong, he

was robbed at gunpoint in a restaurant, he had to fire a worker and he almost missed the birth of his daughter Sarah because he was at a customer's home. Bill finally decided to "bite the bullet" and he quit his other job and went into numismatics full time. One of his first decisions was to handle more than Israel coins. He began to encourage his customers to buy more than just coins, like tokens, medals, paper money, and other exonumia. He has often said that making that decision was one of the smartest things he had ever done.

Bill credits most of his numismatic knowledge to two people, the late Maurice M. Gould, and the late Charlie Bialka. From these two internationally known dealers, Bill learned almost all of the in's and out's that one needs to know to be a dealer and, most important of all, Bill had been introduced to the many people a dealer needs to know. Bill credits being in numismatics in general and especially in Israel numismatics, as being a lifesaver. He would tell you up to this day that he would not have known what he would have done for a living if he had not met up with a specific doctor. His career as being a coin dealer has been a fully satisfying one and he says it is far from over yet. He has handled some of the most famous and important items in Judaic numismatics, including two different 100 Pound Palestine notes. He feels privileged to have handled some famous "name" collections in his auctions such as Morris Bram, Morty Zerder and Saul Sugar. Bill was also chosen to appraise the Kagan-Maremba collection of Israel and Palestine when Arnold Kagan donated it to the Jewish Museum in New York City.

The love of Judaic numismatics has meant a great many things to Bill and his family, one being his increased love for and knowledge of Israel (he fondly remembers the time he spelled the word Israel wrong). He is thinking again about issuing his semi-regular "Numismatic Newsletter" and maybe even writing a book or helping someone else to write a book. He does feel that in these 35 years as a dealer, the most important thing has been the people he has met, many becoming good friends. Maybe someday, he will write about them.

*Written by Donna J. Sims*



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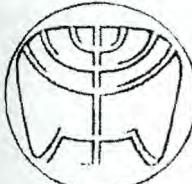
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## HAZOR SECOND IN A SERIES OF 4 RECTANGULAR MEDALS ANCIENT WATER SYSTEMS IN ERETZ ISRAEL

This is the second in the series of medals dedicated to ancient water systems in Eretz Israel. These rectangular-ingot medals come in two versions: 4 oz. sterling silver with exceptionally high quality reliefs, and in pewter. Pewter ornaments became favorites of the elite in Europe and were associated with the Art Nouveau style at the end of the 19th century. Pewter art works are sought after by collectors all over the world.

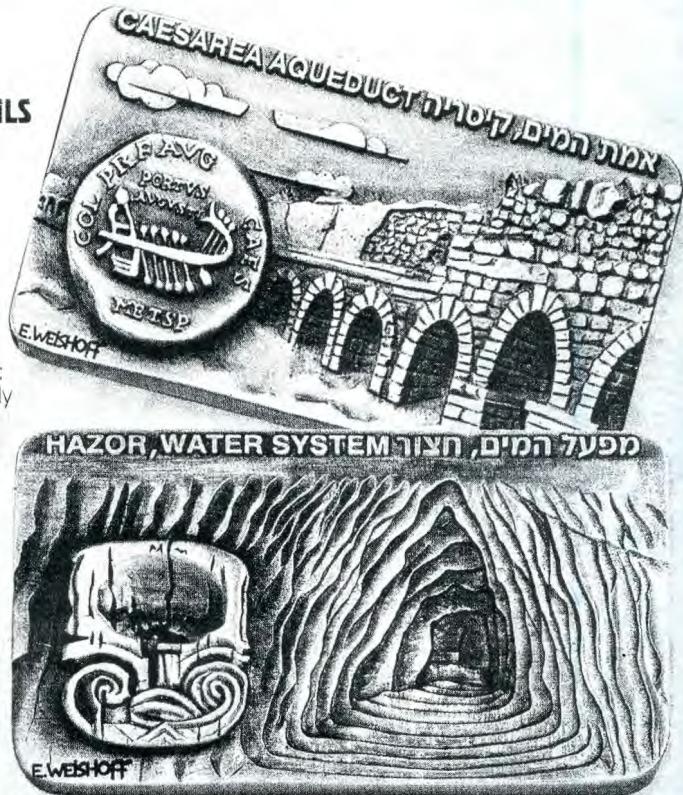
The medals are presented in a special set box with place for the 4 medals and 4 matching stamps issued by the Israel Philatelic Service. Both the medals and the stamps were designed by the noted Israeli artist Eliezer Weishoff.

These ancient water systems are evidence of the engineering skill and understanding of hydrology of the early inhabitants of Eretz Israel. The water system in Hazor, about 10 miles north of the Sea of Galilee, was in use in the eighth and ninth centuries B.C.E. It consisted of a rectangular shaft over 60 ft. deep which was connected to a tunnel 15 ft. wide and 15 ft. high which sloped down in a series of steps for more than 90 ft. until it reached the water table inside the city walls.

The medal face shows the lower portion of the sloping tunnel. The common reverse is inscribed with a verse from the Book of Kings.

The first medal in the series was dedicated to the Aqueduct in Caesarea.

Design: Eliezer Weishoff



### Medal Specifications

No.	Cat. No.	Metal	Size (mm)	Weight (g)	Maximum Mintage
16	21662002	Sterling Silver	65 x 35	136	260
17	41662002	Pewter Ingot	50 x 90	180	260
18	21662021	Set of the 2 silver medals	Caesarea and Hazor (Standing Order)		
19	41662021	Set of the 2 pewter medals	Caesarea and Hazor (Standing Order)		

The maximum mintage of the Caesarea medal has been reduced to 260 only of each version.

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